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his best picture, and contains a clear chaste landscape, a well-massed, harmonious crowd, and types of great power in the pitying skipper's widow and the Yankee-like, severe, difficult repentance of the cruel captain.

Walter Palmer's landscape has the best and most luminous clouds in the exhibition. Chase's studio in-

The sculpture includes some gems.

Warner's dancing nymph ought to be cast in silver; the pose is lovely and fresh, as the careful girl looks down and counts her steps, and the expression of pendent flesh on the hanging leg is unsurpassed. Let us go no more to Europe for our parlor statuettes, since this young maestro has proved his quality.

O'Donovan's bust of Quartley is vigorous, full of impasto, and the most unctuous painting-quality.

St. Gaudens' contributions are all of the most fairy-like charm and limpid clearness; but his two beautiful children, in the centre of the room, have the fat, puffy hands of diplomates, not those of children, sketched with self-satisfied chic, but without knowledge of child-anatomy.

The Bastien-Lepage, the "Joan," is so superb, such a lesson, such a benefaction and benediction, that it is impossible to speak fitly of it in reasonable space, and silence is therefore best. It is a curious thing that the most rigid sticklers for quality

and impressionism and "la tâche" always speak first of the expression of the mouth and eyes of this figure. I have heard several of them do it, and I never heard technists speak so of an admittedly technical masterpiece before.

EDWARD STRAHAN.

the leading ones of American art. Sketches and studies in plenty he saw, clever examples of technique

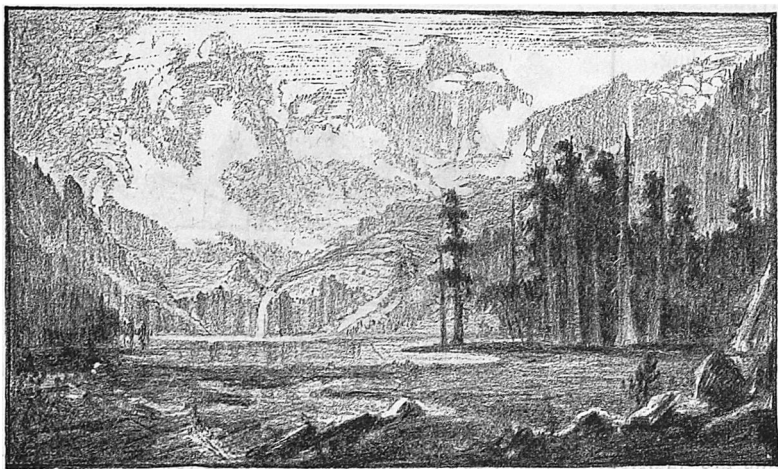


"A MORNING DRAUGHT." BY R. M. SHURTLEFF.

terior is masterly, of course, but the figures are the dulllest and life-least (if there were such a word) of still-life. Eaton's best portrait is that of the daughter of Mrs. Sylvanus Reed, a swan-necked natural belle, full of native character and distinction, sympathetically understood. Weir's china bowl-pot is delightfully simple, old-fashioned, and direct. His vision of the muse of song will not please many; nothing is more unpleasant than this kind of infantine flesh preserved till a lady is past forty, and particularly suggestive of a baby-show. His portrait of an elderly gentleman has vigor and impressiveness, though a relative of the subject unkindly calls it "old crackle." His autumn landscape with golden-roads is serene, distinct, elegant: a crisp Tennysonian poem, without mystery or dreaminess. Maynard's matronly portrait crowned with the silver honors of whitening hair is one of the best and largest in style he has ever shown us; does he not prefer this kind of work to executing whole families in rooms, like the headsman of an inquisition?

Blum, in "The Dance," has made shipwreck of all the qualities which used to be exquisite in his water-colors, and shows us ignorance of oil-effect without compensating knowledge of anatomy, or pose, or of antique tradition. Lathrop's sad fantocchini, all dangling by one string, are sadly worse, and resemble Morris Moore and water.

Miss Rosina Emmett, fatigued with successes in china-painting, sends a large oil-color portrait, where, in emulation of Gainsborough's "Blue Boy," she repre-



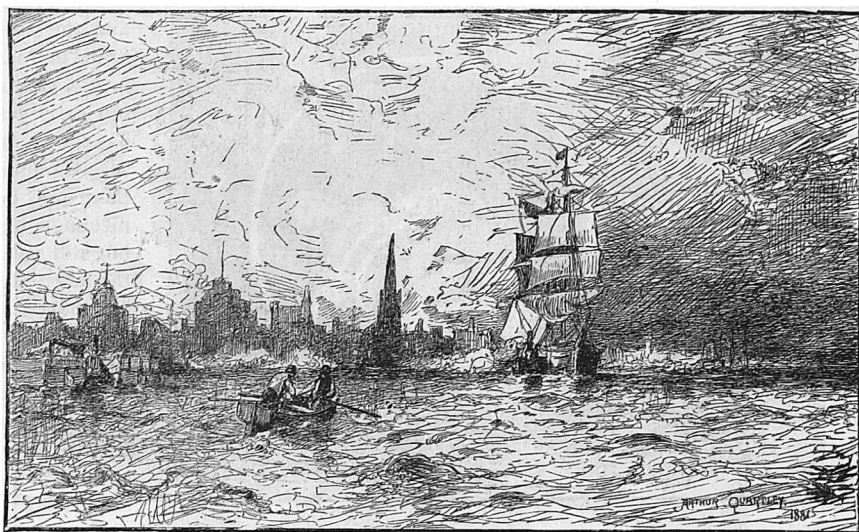
"SIERRA NEVADA." BY ALBERT BIERSTADT.

sents a "Blue Girl," with perfectly-interpreted character, and flesh-color well relieved by its cold environment.

with politeness allow to be seen, that there were almost no pictures worthy of the name in these exhibitions,



"THE WATER'S EDGE." BY E. J. GARDNER.



"AN APRIL DAY, NEW YORK." BY ARTHUR QUARTLEY.

"GRETA'S" BOSTON LETTER.

MULVANEY TO THE RESCUE—MRS. DARRAH'S EXHIBITION—ETCHERS TO THE FORE—A PORTRAIT BY VINTON.

BOSTON, April 15, 1881.

CRY "Mulvaney to the rescue!" This plucky and ambitious young Irish-American graduate of the "Munich school" has just arrived in Boston from Kansas City with a canvas twenty feet by eleven, whereon is depicted, in a hurly-burly of horses and men (the latter using the former for breast-works), the last stand of General Custer before his massacre with his command by the Indians, in the memorable slaughter on the Yellowstone a few years ago. Mr. Mulvaney stopped in New York on his way hither, and in company with former fellow-students at Munich, now leaders of the "young men's" movement in art in the metropolis, looked through the American Artists' exhibition as well as that of the National Academy. His amazement was greater than he could

and "bits of color," experiments of students such as are collected every semester at the schools and academies of painting in European centres for display of the pupils' work. But of serious pictures, compositions, historical subjects, the work of art for which all these sketches of models and studies of color are but the schoolboy's preparatory discipline and exercise, he found next to nothing. Mr. Mulvaney continued his journey to Boston, sadly but more determinedly than ever, with his great canvas, where he seeks a publisher to lithograph and chromo his "Last Rally of Custer," and thus disseminate among the American people some adequate notions of what the art of painting really is. He has literally "hired a hall" for a studio, and there, in overcoat and violet velvet smoking-cap, which admirably sets off his fine olive complexion and features, more Hungarian than Milesian, he is putting the finishing touches to his magnum opus, the monument of two years' diligent labor in sketching, journeying after local details, col-



"AN IDYL OF THE LAKE." BY HENRY A. LOOP.

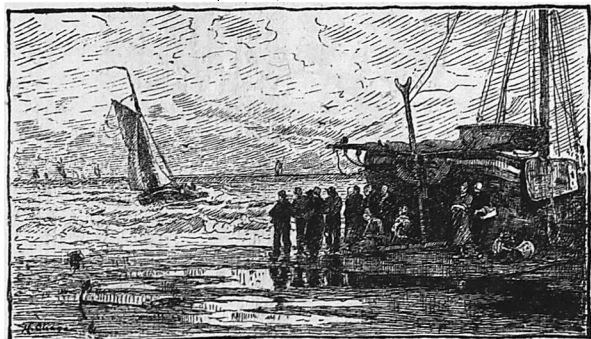
lecting facts and materials, and composing. He has lived among troopers, such as were slaughtered with

Custer, and among Indians of the very tribe that did the slaughtering. He has drawn his inspiration direct from the wild Americanism of the Far West, and striven to keep his whole painting redolent of Americanism fresh and strong. For besides the reproach that we paint no pictures at all, Mr. Mulvaney, with



"THE WAR CORRESPONDENT."
BY G. W. MAYNARD.

American low-life that are really national types, characteristic and familiar. This is the artist's forte. But notwithstanding that he so insists on composition as the sine qua non of a painting properly so called, composition is *not* his forte. As in the "Trial of a Horse Thief," again, the composition lacks point and force, does not tell the story at once in a large way, leaving the detail to reinforce it. The whole broad canvas is a *mêlée* of detail. It is all strongly dealt with: there is no denying that. A horse with a broken hind leg twisted under its body and turning its agonized head backward as it struggles; a huddle of men loading and firing; a couple of naked braves with war-paint smeared on their faces writhing in death in the foreground, foreshortened to the spectator; a man just killed, his body twisted in his blue flannel shirt as he falls backward from a kneeling posture—such are only two or three of the score of examples of powerful treatment of the toughest sorts of problems of painting. The figures, too, are not only well drawn and anatomically correct by themselves, but they are dramatically connected with each other, and combine well to enforce the episodes in which they are respectively employed. But somehow these episodes all cry out together, and with equal force, so that their appeal is confused and distracting, and drowns the total effect in discordant noise. Light and shadow are nowhere massed for any plan of composition, and there is no charm or harmony of color or tone. In short, while there is a method in the composition—the ranging of the soldiers in a ring or half-circle, the open side toward the spectator, so that the plan of the fighting is easily understood—and while there is an artistic study to wreathe all the active forms and lines into this ring not *too* rigidly, but just rigidly enough, there is a failure to observe the larger laws of composition as re-



"AWAITING THE LANDING." BY HARRY CHASE.

gards lighting and values. A woeful letting down, too, is the central figure of Custer. This is vulgarly exaggerated in size, and obtruded out of place in the emphasis with which it is "brought to the fore," with face painted up into a portrait, undramatic and consciously sitting for a likeness, and with a cheaply theatrical pose, like a fencing-master's "first position." The

hero and centre of the picture has, artistically, no relation to the rest of it, and the painful truth becomes obvious that when Mr. Mulvaney had got to this point he was thinking less about American art than he was about the American chromo-buying public. It is a pity so much good painting and highly creditable artistic design should be sacrificed in this way. But there it is, and American art is not rescued after all. A background of as much beauty as force, a cloud of plumed and mounted savages sweeping onward in clouds of dust and battle-smoke, a foreground of surpassing strength and dramatic interest, a general composition clearly planned even if poorly colored and graded in lights, and a central figure stultifying the art-knowledge of the painter and revealing a cheap motive behind the whole—this is what the savior of American art has accomplished for us!

Mrs. S. T. Darrah, the best woman of our Boston school of French landscapists and impressionists, has just made an important exhibition of her works, proving that a serious and persevering habit of work is compatible with the slack-finished style of landscape. With water-colors added, the collection filled one of the larger galleries. The water-colors looked particularly well. For the best results water-colors should be "carried" no farther than the state where the impressionist is fain to stop. Mrs. Darrah has the color and the feeling of a Daubigny for landscape, but only a woman's technical strength. The necessity of her oil painting to be mealy, misty, and sketchy, is the virtue of her water-color, and one sees in the latter better than ever how refined and how true and earnest is her apprehension of the beauty and sentiment of the moody phases of nature in which she delights. Luscious glooms of summer twilight, poetic uncertainties of early morn, melancholy mistiness of wind-swept reaches



"THE CHRISTIAN MARTYR." BY J. CARROLL BECKWITH.

of sandy shore on "gray days," any aspects of earth and sky, river and sea, where there are "nuances" of indistinctness in which sentimental sympathy of feeling may lurk, this serious and dignified middle-aged lady artist expresses with rare strength and charm. There were pictures in her exhibition that might well be mistaken for Daubignys across the room. One would certainly feel great solace in possessing her best work, so rich, "solid," and satisfying are her color and tones, so genuine her feeling, so sweetly serious and elevated the motive of her work.

The etching-itch has caught a great number of people of artistic inclinations hereabouts, and the etching club and its printing-press are in great activity. The latest appearance among the etchers is that of the locally distinguished painter, A. H. Bicknell—rather of autrefois nowadays—who has turned his beautifully finished yet never dry or unsympathetic touch and handling from brush and canvas to needle and copper for the nonce. More delicious darks or more

delicately graded lights, more palpable atmosphere or more exquisite drawing, is seen on no plates that appear on this side of the water. Mr. Bicknell, moreover, does his own printing. We are to have a great exhibition of etchings at the Art Museum this month, to which all American artists have been invited. It promises to be of exceeding great interest. Unluckily at the same

time, or opening a little after, is to come a local exhibition of water-colors and black and white, including etchings, at the Art Club. The latter, however, opens a fortnight later than the Museum exhibition, so that the rejected at the Museum will have a chance to try again at the Art Club.

Another portrait from the rapid and able brush of F. P. Vinton is exhibited. The artist himself ranks it

at the head of his important works, and nobody will dispute its great technical strength and completeness. A solid or better painted head than this of Judge Lord is rarely seen in modern portraiture, and yet it lacks interest, charm, poetry—whatever it is that makes a stranger



"AICHA." BY WILLIAM SARTAIN.

to the subject of a portrait understand the character of man represented, and so study and dwell upon it and return to it. This work of Vinton's is to hang in a court-room as a pendant to the famous portrait by W. M. Hunt of Chief Justice Shaw, which will make what is lacking in Mr. Vinton's picture sufficiently clear. Hunt's picture gives the rugged, sturdy individuality of Shaw with a force that is almost humorous.

The redoubtable Walter Smith has at last fallen, and the art instruction of the public schools of the State of Massachusetts which he devised and erected into a vast machinery probably falls with him. It is too early yet to write the obituary of either. Smith has shown much endurance, a "staying power" under severe pummeling worthy of his British brawn; and there may be fight in him yet. At the school board meetings he gets the most votes of any candidate, but still several short of the required number, and at the latest attempt to elect (last week) it was definitely announced by his chief backer (Mr. C. C. Perkins) that he was henceforth out of the contest. Things have been brought to a head by a quarrel between Smith and his former partners, Prang & Co. The vulgar idea of it is that the "art-master" struck for a larger dividend of the profits of publishing his system of books and cards, and that the lithographers then struck for freedom for him. The ostensible occasion of the break was the alteration of certain of Smith's patterns by the insertion of "guiding points," which the latter claims amounted to a contradiction of his system. He did not, however, conclude to make the break upon it for some months after the new style of patterns had been put in use. Whatever may be the merits of the private falling out between Messrs. Smith and Prang, the public effect in the defeat of Smith's re-election is very important. Without his personal stake and force the wretched mechanical copying of geometrical patterns upon which the teachers



"ON THE ALERT." BY M. J. BURNS.

and pupils of the public schools are forced to expend their energies in the name, now of art and now of industry, according to which kind of public opinion is to be appealed to at the moment, but really in the cause of drawing-book makers and publishers, and to no result upon the children's art impulses, except to kill them dead—is done for, we all hope. GRETA.